

Pure Land Buddhist Liturgy and Prayer Book



Based on the The Mahayana, Infinite Life, Adornment, Purity,
Impartiality, and Enlightenment Sutra

By Brian Chung

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Merit Dedication

As the author of this text, I hereby dedicate all the merits from this book to my mother, father, teachers, benefactors and elders, to repay their kindness. I wish for them long, happy and healthy lives.

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Introduction

The practice of Pure Land Buddhism centers on the Three Tenets of Faith, Vows and Action. Faith is cultivated by studying the sutras, Vows are our resolve for rebirth in the Land of Ultimate Bliss, and Action is our mindfulness of Amitabha. To reach Bodhi, we must be resolute and maintain our Faith and Vows with constant cultivation. Therefore, this short book contains the liturgical version of the 48 Vows of Amitabha (specially crafted in a style more suited for oratory and prayer) and various poems, hymns and odes based on passages from The Mahayana, Infinite Life, Adornment, Purity, Impartiality, and Enlightenment Sutra, the central text of the Pure Land School. Thus, the purpose of this book is to serve as a simple and lyrical practice to daily nurture the Faith and Vows of all Buddhist cultivators. Whether alone or with others, whether silently or aloud, this liturgy book will prove well suited for all forms of practice.

It is recommended that readers recite the 48 Vows in their morning cultivation session and the rest in the evening session. If there are time constraints or special occasions, readers may freely create their own combinations and schedules.

By nurturing one's Faith and Vows, one accumulates merit and good karma. More importantly, one's good roots are given the chance to grow like a lotus bud rising from the mud, and when it blooms, the glory of Bodhi is achieved.

Namo Amitabha!

Namo Amitabha!

Namo Amitabha!

The 48 Vows of Amitabha Liturgy and Prayer

O Amitabha, you hear and you see our trials and ordeals. Heeding our pleas for refuge and relief, you have raised the Western Pure Land of Ultimate Bliss: A paradise adorned by virtue so gloriously infinite that its majesty mounts up beyond Meru peak. You bless all who rise to your land with Sage-hood, even those from the realms of perdition. We see that your land is untainted by the states of woe—untainted by pests, pestilences, phantoms and beasts!

For this Glory of Bodhi, we Vow for your Land.

Amitabha, you hear and you see the disease and decay that lust and desire begets. Thus, you bless all who rise to your land with august and ethereal forms as regal as purple and gold. None are hideous and all are fair—as pure and fair as the Buddha’s thirty two features of eminence.

For this Glory of Bodhi, we Vow for your Land.

Amitabha, you hear and you see the want of discernment in our deluded minds. Thus, you bless all who rise to your land with memory of the vices and virtues of countless lives past ; eyes and ears that fail not to heed even the faintest sight and slightest sound of the furthestmost quarter—now, before and to come.

For this Glory of Bodhi, we Vow for your Land.

Amitabha, you hear and you see the unique will and varied passions of every living being. Thus, you endow all who rise to your land with the omniscient heart that knows the thoughts of every being in existence.

For this Glory of Bodhi, we Vow for your Land.

Amitabha, you hear and you see the burdens and constraints of our flesh bodies. Thus, you bless all who rise to your land with the ease of divine powers, so that they may reach every Buddha-land within the ten quarters in the space of a single thought.

For this Glory of Bodhi, we Vow for your Land.

Amitabha, you hear and you see the filth of desire and duality. Thus, you bless all who rise to your land with purity free from bias—making them resolute in reaching Utmost Bodhi.

For this Glory of Bodhi, we Vow for your Land.

Amitabha, you hear and you see the eternal darkness that covers the Samsara. Thus, we see that you have cast your Light across the ten quarters—more radiant than Sun, Moon and Mani Jewel—so we may be touched by its luminous rays and feel bliss as our pains fade away, as we rise to your land.

For this Glory of Bodhi, we Vow for your Land.

Amitabha, you hear and you see our pain of death. Thus, you bless the untold Sages and Shravakas who dwell in your land with infinite life—immortality so great that even the wisdom of countless Paccekabuddhas combined cannot perceive it no matter how many countless eons they spend to do so.

For Infinite Life, we Vow for your Land

Amitabha, you hear and you see the confusion that grips us. Thus, you have stood forth as the sole beacon of light praised by all the Buddhas of the ten quarters. Peerless is your name and land!

For this Glory of Bodhi, we Vow for your Land.

Amitabha, you hear and you see our wavering will. Thus, we cherish the mercy of your promise that all who seek your land with true resolve, and give their all for that vow, shall ascend to your land within ten chants of your name.

For Pure Land Rebirth, we Chant Amitabha!

Amitabha, you hear and you see the faith of the sincere, those who joyously hear your name, vow for Bodhi, amass merits and abide by the Six Paramitas, those who dedicate their all to your land and chant your name with one heart through night and day without cease. We see that you grace such faith by appearing before them during their last breath—surrounded by a host of Sages—and lifting their souls into your land as Mahabodhisattvas.

For this Glory of Bodhi, we Vow for your Land.

Amitabha, you hear and you see the fear of the penitent. Thus, you extend your grace to both the brilliant and base. We see that the wicked who repent, and turn to abide in the Buddha and Dharma—now seekers of your land—are pardoned and enter your land when their lives end.

For this Mercy of Bodhi, we Vow for your Land.

Amitabha, you hear and you see the burdens placed upon women and the weak. Thus, we see that you have wisely ensured that women who rise to your land shall be freed from the burdens of their gender, and assume the august and ethereal form of the Sages. We see that you bless all in boundless lotus buds that glide upon the Seven Jeweled Lagoon.

For this Glory of Bodhi, we Vow for your Land.

Amitabha, you hear and you see our need for fortune and provision. Thus, you bless all who abide in you with the respect of both men and devas. We see that any being who hears your name but once will be blessed with health, beauty and patrician rebirth, and the chance to abide in the highest Dharma.

For this Glory of Bodhi, we Vow for your Land.

Amitabha, you hear and you see the inequality that we suffer. Thus, you endow all who rise to your land with the same virtuous heart, and the Samadhi bliss of a monk free from outflows. Freeing them from the pains that attachment to the body brings.

For this Glory of Bodhi, we Vow for your Land.

Amitabha, you hear and you see our lack of wisdom and endurance. Thus, you bless all who rise to your land with virtue as incorruptible as the Vajra Buddha. You bestow on them radiant halos of wisdom so they may go forth and preach the Dharma like clockwork.

For this Glory of Bodhi, we Vow for your Land.

Amitabha, you hear and you see the need to increase the ranks of Sages. Thus, all who rise to your land attain Utmost Bodhi within one life, and for those who have made Mahayana vows to defer Bodhi until all beings have been saved, you help them save and convert countless souls with the wisdom, powers and eloquence of Samantabhadra.

For this Glory of Bodhi, we Vow for your Land.

Amitabha, you hear and you see the want that torments us. Thus, you bless all who rise to your land with abundance, with food, clothes and goods of ever kind on demand. We are grateful that by the power of your merit, anyone in your land who seeks to make offerings to the Buddhas of the ten quarters will see rich requisites appear before them as a response to that thought.

For this Glory of Bodhi, we Vow for your Land.

Amitabha, you hear and you see the poverty of our world. Thus, the myriad of wondrous adornments of your land, from the golden ground to blue skies above—the flora, rivers, lakes, villas and halls—are of indescribable beauty. We hear that even the depiction given by clairvoyant Sages cannot do it justice.

For this Glory of Bodhi, we Vow for your Land.

Amitabha, you hear and you see our want of a spacious Way-place. Thus, we feel joy when we see that you have raised rows of tall and bejeweled Bodhi Trees to adorn your Way-places. Trees of gleaming mirrors from which all who dwell in your land may see any world they wish by mere gaze.

For this Glory of Bodhi, we Vow for your Land.

Amitabha, you hear and you see the crowdedness of our world. We yearn for the bliss of your bright and unblemished Pure Land, which you have made gleaming and boundless. It illumines the ten quarters and blesses the hearts of all who perceive its light.

For this Glory of Bodhi, we Vow for your Land.

Amitabha, you hear and you see the way our world reeks. Thus, we are overjoyed that all in your land—from the palaces to the pavilions ; from the ground to the skies above—are made from scented woods and fragrant treasures of every kind. Your land perfumes the ten quarters and blesses the Bodhi resolve of all who inhale its sweet scents.

For this Glory of Bodhi, we Vow for your Land.

Amitabha, you hear and you see our need for enduring Samadhi. Thus, you use the merit of your name to bestow upon the Sages and faithful the Samadhi of purity, release and equality. We see that they firmly abide in the highest Samadhi, honor countless Buddhas and attain Utmost Bodhi. We know that upon hearing your name, they become Great Sages and dwell forever without bias in all that which is perfect, pure and wise.

For this Glory of Bodhi, we Vow for your Land.

Namo Amitabha

Namo Amitabha

Namo Amitabha

Ode to Ven. Master Hai Xian

My riches are here: Old robes and alms bowl,
With these I free myself from worldly toil,
With these I sow and plough the Dharma field,
And shatter all that wicked Maras yield,

My will is here: In wisdom genuine,
With resolve to soar beyond the three realms,
And sail across the cruel seas of greed
To halcyon shores of blissful Bodhi,

My heart is here: Amongst Tathagatas,
Firm in the lotus pond of Amita,
Day and night, it is wise within the Way,
Never in dust nor adrift and away.

Pure Land Lyrical Hymn

O boundless the land
Built by Amida's hand,
O splendrous the sky
Of his fair paradise,
A beauty to behold,
A wonder to enjoy,
An august afterlife
For the faithfully wise,

Gleaming with purple
And paved with gold,
Groves of lush trees
Of lapis lazuli leaves,
Sweet beryl berries,
And scented petals
Of agate and crystal,

A gleaming dominion
Of glowing pavilions,
Of lofty resplendence
And fragrant brilliance,
Pulling poor souls
Away from worldly woes
With a breeze of Bodhi
And blissful Samadhi!

The Way to Pure Land

The Way to Pure Land
Is well paved and straight,
Upon it gilded tiles are laid,
Adorned by halcyon lakes
And ponds of golden sand,
Shaded by ornate branches
Of silver, jade and crystal,
Whose sweet scented petals
Glide in the breeze and drift
Upon the waters—swirling
In graceful whirls and ripples,
Immersed in singing songbirds
Perched on amber arbors,
humming hymns of harmony
And the most soothing melody.



Ode to the Sages of Pure Land

Wisdom as vast as the boundless sea,
 Bodhi as high and wide as Meru peak,
 Their halos bright beyond sunbeam,
 Surpassing the moon's luminous gleam.
 Their hearts white and serene like snowy hills,
 Patience as enduring as the fields,
 Their calm minds like pristine waters
 That wash away the defiling dusts,
 Their profound insight as keen as fire,
 Burning away all worry and fraught,
 Non abiding and breezing o'er any mire,
 Sounds of Dharma: Striking lightning,
 Warning the deluded to wisdom ripen,
 Pouring forth truth like soothing sweet dew,
 Their grace like canopies of Bodhi trees,
 Cool shades of respite for you and for me.

Requiem Hymn

By the Grace of Amitabha,
 You shall transcend the Samsara,
 This mantra is your Sila,
 Your Samadhi, and your Prajna,
 The shield that demons fear,
 The call that all yearn to hear,
 The sword that slices Gordian knot
 Of lustful desire and crushing fraught.
 Thus, with one heart in Him seek,
 Seek rebirth in Ultimate Bliss,
 And save yourself from the abyss
 Of the dismal infernal Naraka
 By resolving for with resolute faith
 The profound Dharma of Amitabha,
 His Forty Eight Vows and Grace!
 Dither not and seek in haste,
 Leap high above cruel Dukkha,
 Beyond evil karma and King Yama,
 To become a Bodhisattva
 Standing atop the lofty Lotus Dais
 Beside Amita Tathagata,
 Beside merciful Avalokitesvara,
 And by the wise Mahathamaprata,
 And at that time your mind will know
 That you have always been Amitabha,
 And your birthright is to enjoy,
 Now and forever, the eternal delight
 Of the Land of Sole and Lasting Light.

Namo Amitabha (Recite at least ten times)

Bodhi Resolve Prayer

I Yearn for Bodhi for life's a dream,
A dark fleeting phantom, and a
Shadowy hollow illusion,
Filled with nightmares of greed and fear,
Of Love and Loss and scorching
Fires of burning ire and desire,
Of hard times that haunt and linger.
I know that all dharmas are but dew and mist,
Ready to fade when the Sun of
Inner Wisdom shines and pours forth,
Revealing the blooming lotus
And the Seven Jeweled Lagoon
Of the Land of Ultimate Bliss.



Twilight in Paradise: Lament of the Wicked:

“It is twilight in paradise
 And the end of my idle life
 Of lavish pleasure is nigh.
 My dreams benighted,
 Crumbling before my eyes,
 I sorely regret frittering away
 Those calm prosperous days
 Of youth, wealth and peace
 On plunder and wicked deeds,
 Wrathful violence and conspiracies,
 On fraud, libel and charlatanry,
 And slender courtesans who steal
 Lascivious glances and feelings.
 Now I stand before the abyss,
 Old, withered and ready to slip
 From my blissful mortal coil
 And into the infernal boiling oil.

Alas! I now rue my failure to do
Even a single upright deed!”

A reminder for repentance:

We are mired in a dark quagmire
Of cruel and murky quicksand,
We dance no more to Kama’s lyre,

And vow for the Western Pure Land,
The Eternal Dawn of blissful Bodhi!
Arising by Amida’s hand,

A place of serene Samadhi,
Mani Jewels and Way Places,
And the most soothing purity,

Golden roads and glowing palaces,
Purple robes and rows of jade trees,
All wrought by His Great Promises!

Cool lotus ponds of true respite for you and me,
And for all who from sin and iniquity leave!



Turning and Tumbling: The Gloomng Samsara

Turning and burning and tumbling
 The Wheel of Death and Rebirth
 Ceases not and rumbles onwards
 As deluded souls forever cycle and circle
 Dear friends become foul foes
 Precious love turns into towering hate
 And former rivals become kinfolk

Driven by greed by lust and by wrath
 The karma for Hell and Ghost and Beastly
 Rebirth are thus wrought and brought about
 Stumbling and weeping and sighing
 Evil souls roam in penury and misery
 For eon after eon and life after life
 Crushed by sins with no end in sight

Then, before them, a breach, a ray of light!
Human rebirth is begotten once more
A chance, they say, is as rare as
A palmful of soil placed next to all
The earth and the dirt of the world entire
Yet few are Sages while scores of souls
Drown amidst their own avarice

For every act there will be an echo
For every debt there is a date
And as the Samsara turns and tumbles
All and everyone shall have their due
For karmic deeds and debts and credits
Dating back to b'fore time immemorial
And so, as the Samsara wheels and whirls

Some become sheep and cattle of karmic foes
To repay deeds now rued with flesh and labor
Others are reborn as frivolous heirs
To spend riches stolen from them in lives prior
The Ancients say that to be man and wife
For but a day, is the fruit of a century
Of causes and conditions and karma

Lord Yama's lash is fierce and frightful
Karmic reckoning is rarely trifling
Yet men tread and trample upon the precepts
Murdering and masquerading as they plunder
Pining for profit during the day

Quaffing wine and vying for vice at night
 They are sly even in their slumber

Alas! Such ingrates are thicker than granite
 Fickle and foolish, they gloat over gluttony
 Blind to karma and its comeuppance
 They are rapacious rabble who crave for weal
 While ignorant of the fact that only merit
 Can enable their dreams to take wing
 And that all woes are withered by patience

Heaping up sins higher than mountains
 They squander their short human years
 On desire and vanity and vainglory
 And then they turn and tumble and slip
 Back into the evil abyss of abject chastisement
 Swapping their human bodies for
 Gaunt ghostly forms and bestial hooves

As burning ambition paves the way to perdition
 Stocks of merit are so often frittered away
 By pompous pride and angry arrogance
 By a lack of mercy and filial piety
 By lies and insults and scathing sarcasm
 And by lascivious pursuits that sully purity
 Thus, the fortunes of men forever wax and wane

The wise bear slights with a serene smile
 And forever hold onto the five precepts
 Even in the face of envy, tempers and temptations

They are well aware of the follies of men
 And seek not pomp, power or to lord over and reign
 They ask only for peaceful lives of purpose
 Of chastity and charity and piety

For they eschew vice and embrace virtue
 Their burgeoning stocks of merit bring forth
 Ascension to delightful new heights
 Far above this dreary and weary world
 To be gods and goddesses who glide beyond
 The lush heavenly groves atop Meru Peak
 And play ever pleasing tunes on divine lutes!

Once they are reborn as men and women
 They are bright and beautiful and healthy
 Wanting neither wealth nor influence
 They prostrate and pray to the proper Dharma
 And stroll in blooming blossoming orchards
 Enjoying prose and poetry most moving
 Amid sweet sounding harps and harpsichords

But, those climbing back to the realm of men
 From the plunging depths of punishment
 Are servile and must suffer scores of burdens
 They toil and moil amid squalor and scarcity
 Their previous miserliness manifest as poverty
 Their slow wit the fruit of their slanders
 And their short lifespans halved by their wrath!

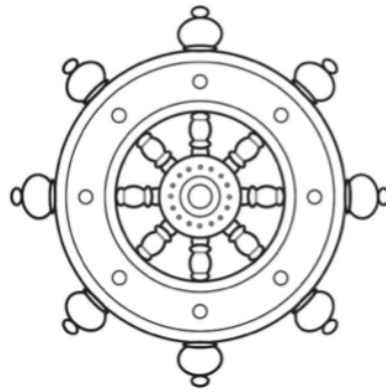
Thus, the Samsara is dismal glooming darkness

Ruled by delusion and defined by pain
 A place where souls stumble and tumble
 As they stubbornly quest for the phantoms of
 Fleeting love and glory, pomp and luxury
 And suffer the karmic pains of their sins
 Which they garner and gather as they hanker!

Therefore, why linger to burn and turn?
 Why not seize the chance to urgently seek
 Unsurpassed Bodhi through Amitabha's grace?
 Forfeit attachments to the impermanent
 Bring forth faith in his Forty Eight Vows
 Resolve for rebirth in the Western Buddha-land
 By being ever mindful of his noble name!

The Pure Land is resplendent without peer
 Aptly lauded as the Land of Ultimate Bliss
 From its aurulent soil arises bejeweled trees of
 Beryl berries, cameo glass branches, and amber leaves
 Surrounded by teal hued rivulets and pristine rivers
 Adorned by Pavilions and Palaces most fair
 And devoid of even the faintest hint of the fiendish

Thus, chant Amita's Buddha-name with
 Faith and Resolve and Fortitude most resolute
 Arise in the Lotus Lagoon as brilliant Bodhisattvas
 Endowed with the 32 features of eminence
 With infinite life and transcendental powers
 Forever free from the sufferings of the Samsara!



Amita Buddha
The Light of the Western Land Of Ultimate
Bliss